

CATHOLIC THEATRE

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by the

NATIONAL CATHOLIC THEATRE CONFERENCE

COLLEGE OF ST. MARY OF THE SPRINGS, COLUMBUS, OHIO

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Robert Cotter of Quigley Preparatory Seminary as the Devil
in "The Devil A Saint Would Be."

The Abbey's 'Devil'

by The Rev. John P. O'Donnell, M.A., S.T.L.

Twice in recent years the devil has dared to set his scalding foot upon the dewy green turf of Holy Ireland. And twice he has been dramatically driven out of this land of the "hundred thousand welcomes." His exits-with-a-flourish on the stage of the Abbey Theatre are worthy of the dramatist's attention.

Satan's first attempt to crash the gates of the Isle of the Saints was ably represented in Frank Carney's *The Righteous Are Bold*. Since this play has found its way in the United States to the college theatres, and later even to Broadway, it is known to most N.C.T.C. members. But the Abbey Theatre of Dublin produced in 1951 another "devil play" which deserves our notice, for it is in some ways superior to *The Righteous Are Bold*. Louis D'Alton has written in *The Devil A Saint Would Be* a play of shrewd insight, of rollicking good humor, of great emotional impact, and of ascetic awareness that commands the respect of the theologian. If you have ever wished that some able playwright would take the wily "Screwtape" (of the famous letters-to-his-nephew) and fashion an intelligent play about the *real* workings of the devil, then *The Devil A Saint Would Be* is the play for you.

No sensational conflict based on the extremely rare case of diabolical possession serves as the backbone of this play, but rather the ordinary systematic pursuit of souls as it appears on the devil's daily agenda. Specifically, the play deals with Satan's efforts to trap the soul of a little old lady well advanced on the road to holiness. "Stacey" opens the play with a grand surrendering of all her worldly goods, chiefly her ownership of a

(Continued on page 6.)

SEMINARY & PARISH THEATRE

NEWS NOTES

Community

The Catholic Theatre Guild of Evansville, Ind.—"The Comedian," Feb. 16, 17; "The Loud Red Patrick," April.

The Dayton Blackfriars' Guild—"Bamboo Cross," Feb. 1, 2; "Arsenic and Old Lace," April.

Catholic Theatre Guild of Indianapolis—"Glass Menagerie," Feb. 7, 8, 9.

Mobile Theatre Guild—"Jane Eyre."

Mary Productions—New play on the life of St. Bernadette, "Stairway to Eternity," by Mary Eunice Sayrahder, 4 scenes, 12 females, 1 male, royalty free; contact Mary Productions, 58 Lenison Avenue, Belford, N. J.

College

College of St. Teresa, Kansas City, Mo.—"The Red Shoes," April 16-20, directed by Sister M. Felice.

Catholic University of America—"The New Canticle,"

dance drama of St. Therese of Lisieux by Sara Lee Stadler, April 11, 12.

Mundelein College—"The Glass Menagerie," Feb. 9, 10.

Hillyer College—"Liliom," Feb. 20-23, Feb. 27-Mar. 2; "The White Sheep of the Family," May 1-4, May 8-11.

High School

St. Scholastica's Academy, Fort Smith, Ark.—"Smallest of All," March; students writing original one-act plays for student assemblies, directed by the authors.

Aumption High School, Louisville, Ky.—"One Red Rose," "Young and Fair," directed by Miss Mary Ann Fueglein; "Introducing Mopsy," "Jack of Spades," "Early Frost," "The Purple Door Knob," student directed.

Institute of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Md.—"Song at the Scaffold," March 1, 2.

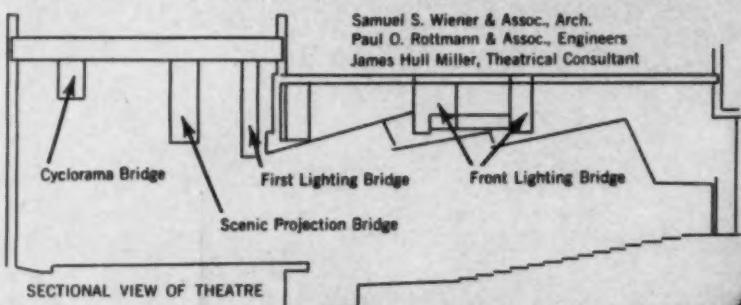
Stanbrook Hall, Duluth, Minn.—"The Wizard of Oz," Feb. 28; an evening of Chamber Theater with original scripts by Senior Dramatic Club; Japanese play, "The Flower of Yeddo," for play-festival; Dramatic Week, April 14-18.

(Continued on page 12.)

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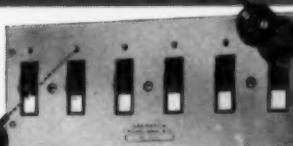


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ORIGINATORS AND MANUFACTURERS OF KLIEGLIGHTS

From the President's Desk . . .

The Catholic Playwrighting Workshop has moved from the realm of dreams into the world of reality. For five days, June 9-13, twenty young Catholic playwrights of promise will be guests of Loyola University which has graciously offered to host the first workshop. The Universities of Notre Dame and Villanova have also expressed the desire to house the workshop in future years.

In virtue of the living endowment to be provided by the contributions of the members of the Conference, the apprentice-playwrights will be brought to Loyola on an all-expense-paid basis with the exception of transportation costs. There they will meet professional playwrights and critics, discuss their plays and hear readers' theatre presentations of original works written by members of the group.

The permanent staff of the workshop will consist of Donald Hugh Dickinson, Chairman; Rev. Urban Nagle, O.P. and Sister Mary Olive, S.P. Doctor John Reich, adapter of the highly successful *Mary Stuart* and director of the Goodman Memorial Theatre, will be a visiting lecturer. Arrangements are also under way to engage two other outstanding lecturers for the workshop. Also, on one of the days of the session, the various publishers will be invited to discuss with our playwrights the prospects for Catholic playwriting.

Students for the workshop will be selected by a Board of Admissions which will evaluate the script material which applicants submit to the Executive Office. Members of the Board of Admissions are: Rev. Urban Nagle, O.P., Emmet Lavery, Donald H. Dickinson, and Natalie White. If the Board, after examination of the materials submitted, judges that the applicant should be admitted to the Workshop, all that will be required of the applicant is a registration fee of \$3.00 to cover secretarial costs and costs for the mailing of their scripts to the various members of the Board.

From the manuscripts which have already been submitted, I look for great things to come from the Workshop. I am confident that we will have at least twenty original scripts which we can publish for use by our members next year in the National Catholic Playwrighting Festival. Any member who chooses to do one of the original scripts from the list which we will provide in late summer or early fall, will also be requested to evaluate the production on a form supplied by the executive office. Thus, our apprentice playwrights will have the benefit of not one but many production laboratories. These evaluations will be a guide to the playwrights in any necessary rewrite jobs or, may possibly serve as a bargaining point in seeking standard publication.

Two things I earnestly request of the membership—your fervent prayers and your contribution if you have not already made it. We are still far from the goal; but I am confident that our divine Savior will bless this project for the positive promotion of Christian values in theatre.

I also look to this Workshop as a means of emphasizing the role of the Conference in the religious drama field. In

the current and widespread literature on religious drama, the Conference is given negligible credit. One would think that the religious drama movement was an invention of either E. Martin Browne or the Union Theological Seminary. As a matter of fact, the Conference for the past twenty-one years has pioneered in and has been practically the sole promoter of religious drama. Not only has it revived miracle and morality plays and stirred interest in the works of Calderon and Gheon, but also from its ranks have come some of the finest plays in the field of modern religious drama, for example, the prolific and eminent works of Emmet Lavery and Urban Nagle, O.P. Our latest venture—the workshop—will, we trust, serve to restimulate the interest of the Conference in religious drama and help to set the historical record straight.

Those who wish to apply are urged to submit their materials to me at the Executive Office. Those who are not interested in applying are urged to give their strongest support and widespread publicity to the workshop.

In conclusion, may I add a word of congratulations to all those who have been concerned with the editing and publication of CRITIQUE. Its excellence augurs great things of the Conference as a forum and service bureau for Catholic educational theatre. Words, indeed, are incapable of expressing my boundless gratitude to those who have collaborated in breathing life and intellectual vigor into the new publication.

Faithfully in St. Genesius,

Father *Malvin*, S. O. B.

Announcements

The President wishes to thank the Rochester Unit for donating \$200.00 to the Living Endowment. This sum represents the profits of the recent Workshop sponsored by the Unit at St. Agnes High School.

The President also wishes to thank the Detroit Unit for its contribution of \$50 to the national treasury. This sum represents the proceeds of a Technical Workshop sponsored by the Unit at Rosary High School, Detroit.

On March 1 the members of the Pennsylvania Unit met together with the President, Sister Angelita, B.V.M. and Therese Marie Cuny, Co-Chairmen of the 1959 Convention. The meeting was held at the Bellvue-Stratford hotel, scene of the next Convention. Local committees were organized and facilities were toured. Most important of all, the dates were set for the Convention.

Inasmuch as it is almost impossible to find a date in June which is acceptable for all sections of the country and, as it was decided that August is not a good time for organizing students for a Convention trip, the Committee set the dates for Easter Week, March 29 (Easter Sunday—registration) March 30, 31, and April 1.

PARISH THEATRE AT ST. AMBROSE



Members of the St. Ambrose Players, Cheverly, Maryland. Rt. Rev. Msgr. Philip J. Brown, pastor of St. Ambrose, is seated in the foreground. The Players have presented four productions since their organization in the fall of 1956.

In August of 1956, the ST. AMBROSE PLAYERS became affiliated with the National Catholic Theatre Conference. With the encouragement of Rt. Rev. Msgr. Philip J. Brown, pastor of St. Ambrose Church in Cheverly, Maryland, Mrs. Victor Turyn and Mrs. Robert C. Harper began play reading for the first production in the school auditorium.

Problems were many. The stage was very small, all lighting equipment had to be rented, finances were non-existent. And the city of Cheverly lay but a few miles from Washington, D. C., where Broadway productions were presented in two large theatres. Nearby was Catholic University with its large playhouse, its impressive School of Speech and Drama, and its excellent staff. Would there be an audience for a small, adult community group?

The two women persisted. The first play, "Arensic and Old Lace" was cast, with Mrs. Harper directing. Again, a problem: not enough men! But men's groups in the parish were scouted, and the eleven roles were filled. When the curtain rose on the first production November 29-30 and December 1, it was before a heart-warming audience of six hundred men, women, and children.

In January, the group was organized, with Mrs. Turyn as the first president. A Playreading Committee set to work, and for its second production, selected "Gramercy

Ghost." Msgr. Brown further encouraged the group by purchasing twelve 500-watt lights and a dimmer panel for their use.

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by the
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Mrs. Harper again directed, and a children's performance (one of two dress rehearsals) was added to the other three performances. To the delight of the PLAYERS, for the children's performance, there was "standing room only." The second production, "Gramercy Ghost," was a success, both artistically and financially, and was presented on May 9-10-11, 1957.

Since the group had organized under a constitution, an election was held in June, and new officers went busily to work. When the parish held its annual carnival in August, a special booth (a tiny stage with microphone), was given to the PLAYERS. (With the booth, came an entreaty from the pastor: raise funds for the disposal of the automobile the last night of the Carnival.) Singers, dancers, and players in costume kept the carnival stage lively.

On October 24-25-26, 1957, the PLAYERS gave their third production, "A MURDER HAS BEEN ARRANGED." A standardized format for the program has been adopted, a season's subscription ticket had been released to parishioners, more players had joined the group. Mrs. Harper again directed. The stage, with the excellent set designed by Ferman Long, and lighted expertly by its new lights, created the illusion of a London stage for the audience. Once again, the group discovered there were people in the community hungry for good theatre.

"Light Up The Sky," a rollicking comedy by Moss Hart, was their fourth production, under the direction of

Father Paul Donovan, O.S.s.T. On February 11, a successful dress rehearsal of the play was presented to the children of the St. Ambrose school. On February 13 and 14, a responsive audience enjoyed the play. But on the following day, the date of the final performance, snow began blanketing the entire area, making roads impassable, and closing schools and public buildings. Undaunted, the PLAYERS allowed one week for a thaw, and selected the following Saturday, Feb. 22, for the final performance. Because of special publicity, a large audience was on hand that evening. Another success!

The group plans to give their fifth production on May 22-23-24, and has selected "High Ground" to close the season.

The officers of the group are: Lou Harper, President; Gerard Glaser, Vice-President; Jack Quinn, Treasurer; Marie McGowan, Recording Secretary, and Jean Kain, Corresponding Secretary. Committee heads are: Mary Walsh, Playreading; Oscar Kluh, Publicity; and Ferman Long, Workshop.

The PLAYERS come from as far northwest as Washington State, as far south as New Orleans, but easterners and southerners predominate. Almost all of them have worked with Little Theatres or community theatres, some with college groups. Although all of them are parents, once again they have "sniffed the grease paint," and are working hard to better the group.

No one is prouder of the ST. AMBROSE PLAYERS than Msgr. Brown, who likes to boast that his is the only parish dramatic group in the Archdiocese of Washington.

Some of the BROADWAY & TV SHOWS

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Auntie Mame, Back to Methusalah, Polly Bergen Show, Firestone, Guys & Dolls, Hit Parade, Kraft, Long Day's Journey, Look Homeward Angel, Lute Song, Much Ado About Nothing, Oh Captain, Oklahoma, Patti Page Show, Plain & Fancy, Rope Dancers, Say Darling, Show Boat, Ed Sullivan Show, The Bells Are Ringing, The King & I, The Lark, The Music Man, Time Remembered, West Side Story and thousands of others.

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ARSENIC AND OLD LACE	Kaufmann
ROOM SERVICE	Murray & Boretty
THE MIKADO	Gilbert & Sullivan
STALAG 17	Bevan & Trycinski
CAREER ANGEL	Murray
EVERYMAN	Traditional
HMS PINAFORE	Gilbert & Sullivan
JULIUS CAESAR	Shakespeare
THE OTHER WISE MAN	Phelps
THE FALLEN GRAIN	Gaughan
JOURNEY'S END	Sheriff
MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL	Eliot
NO TIME FOR SERGEANTS	Levin
PASSION PLAY	Traditional
SAVANAROLA	Nagle
THE STRONG ARE LONELY	Hockwallder
TWELVE ANGRY MEN	Rose

The Abbey's 'Devil'

by the Rev. John P. O'Donnell

(Continued from page 1.)

public house. Shorn of her possessions, she becomes a prime target for the evil one. The gentleman from "down under" arrives quite punctually in the second scene. No tail to trip over, no horns to give him away, no tell tale odor of sulphur about him, but rather well groomed, with a hint of a halo, and just a bit too much of "My Sin" cologne, Satan charms rather than chokes his victim, wearies her with his eclectic theology, and has her just about wrapped up for delivery to an oven in hell's V. I. P. section when the parish priest, armed with good theology and better holy water, snatches Stacey safely back from the brimstone brink.

The end of the second act is a hair raiser. Stage directions say simply, "Stacey casts the holy water at the devil who disappears in flames and smoke." Directors who hope to use the same theatre for future shows without having to rebuild it with fire insurance funds, will spend many anxious moments working out this climax. We used seven stage hands to bring it off. Since they were seminarians I was aware that they were dedicated to demolishing the reign of Satan, but I never realized their earnestness until I saw them work backstage. Maneuvering dimmers and flicking blue lightning flashes, rolling the kettle drums, exploding the flash pot, folding in the cloudburst music from the "Grand Canyon Suite," and in the same instant starting to draw the closing curtain—they succeeded in scaring the devil out of the set, and, as it happened, out of the audience!

Other sources of conflict, real, human, genuinely motivated, arise from Stacey's relationship to her family, to the professional men of the village, lawyer, doctor, priest. Comic relief is provided by the local policeman and a pair of boisterous tinkers. Scene grows into scene in fluid movement like the stride of a centipede. Stacey's surrender of her property occasions her nephew Sean's greed which, in turn, is fed by the tinker's proposal to share a counterfeiting scheme. Stacey's reproaches lead to Sean's revenge, the attempt to commit her to an asylum. Unable to fathom Stacey's spirit of holy poverty, the cynical lawyer and the clinical doctor serve as accessories to the plot. The wise parish priest, adamant in the face of this

conniving, provides a reliable bulwark against the evil that attacks his parish, evil wrought by both the devil and his own parishioners.

All this is expressed in witty, brilliant, and even sublime dialogue. The lilt of the Irish idiom provides its own lyrical rhythms. The concise wisdom of the lines makes many of them epigrammatical. And interspersed among this uncommonly intelligent dialogue are spaced sublime passages like the following:

Stacey: I'm only an old woman an' not worth all this. All I want is to be out of harm's way and to be safe.

Saint: It is too late for that. You left the security and ease of piety and sought the perils and dangers of holiness. You ceased then to be an old woman keeping out of harm's way. You became the concern of the powers

Father John P. O'Donnell, ordained at Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary, evidently was tagged early by his Superiors as a potential director, for shortly following his ordination he was sent back to his Alma Mater, Quigley Prep seminary to handle the dramatics program. In 1957, Father received his MA degree in Speech from the University of Notre Dame, has been holding the fort at Quigley, serving as chaplain for the Chicago Community Theatre, and giving fine service on the executive Board of the Chicago Drama Festival. Good connections with the Dublin Players gave him the lead on Louis D'Alton which he followed up in his search for suitable theatre material for his boys at Quigley.

and principalities. You summoned forth the hosts and the hierarchies. For Satan could not refuse the challenge, nor God refuse to defend his own. You rang the trumpets in the highest heavens till the echo struck upon the brazen doors of the lowest hell.

Stacey: . . . Could one oul' woman do all that? Could the heavens be roused and the choirs and the angels by me? . . . Even the battle to be lost an' I to be lost

'Why Theatre in the Seminary?'

Results of a survey regarding the place of drama in seminary curriculum were announced in a seminar at the national convention of the Conference in Kansas City last June.

Chairman Father Gerard S. Brennan, Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit, announced that 39 seminaries had submitted a composite list of 172 plays presented by them privately or publicly. Plays most popular with the seminaries

are listed on page 5.

Purpose of dramatics in seminaries:

1. development of the appreciation of art.
2. training for the use of the body in speaking
3. removal of fear of an audience
4. training for TV and radio work in the priesthood
5. a recreational outlet

with it, it puts heart into me to think how God can be roused up to defend his own.

Since the play is long the director will probably be forced to cut, but he will do so with the reluctance of a sea captain wondering what precious cargo he must jettison to keep the ship afloat. The author, fearful that his delicate theme may not have been stated with sufficient clarity, was at times unduly repetitious. It will be the director's chore to estimate how much of this repetition for emphasis his audience needs.

In this play we make some progress in our search for first-rate Catholic drama. We need not spend all our time sighing about the dearth of it in America—"The good aren't able and the able aren't good." Perhaps we can find some of it in Ireland, a country both Catholic and English speaking, nurturing a culture in which Christian drama finds easier birth. Louis D'Alton has given us, through the Abbey Theater, at least one Catholic play which will not easily be surpassed. One regrets that a playwright of his perception and skill should already have been called in death. When you read the last scene of this play you will not find it difficult to imagine that God greeted Louis D'Alton at the gates of heaven with words to this effect, "Rarely has anyone written so beautifully of My mercy as you did in *The Devil A Saint Would Be*."

Two of his other plays are also additions to the N.C.T.C. library list, *This Other Eden* and *They Got What They Wanted*. Those wishing to purchase copies will find them a bargain at fifty cents, and the royalty fees commensurately moderate. The agent is P. J. Bourke, 64 Dame Street, Dublin.

Rochester's Junior Catholic Theatre Guild

Founded in 1955 by Mr. Howard Meath of Rochester's C.Y.O., the Junior Catholic Theatre Guild will see five full length productions and three one act plays this year. The dramatic school will be increased in the fall to include an advanced course in workshop and plans include productions of "Kamiano" and "Murder in the Nunnery."

The group is headed by Mr. Jack Burnett, for many years interested and active in the theatre as actor, director and producer. Program for this season includes the following:

April 18th and 19th—at Immaculate Conception Parish, "Little Miss Fortune," directed by James Bradley.

April 26th and 27th—at St. Andrew's Parish, "Youth Saves the Day," directed by Herbert Hart.

May 2nd and 3rd—at Blessed Sacrament Parish, "Girl in the Rain," directed by George and Jane Parsons.

May 16th and 17th—at St. Charles Borromeo Parish, "I Am a Family Crisis," directed by John Regan.

May 23th and 24th—at St. Monica's Parish, "Reserve Two for Murder," directed by Arloha McVinnie.

Directors have all had experience in amateur and pro-

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Junior Catholic Theatre Guild's production of "The Ugly Duckling" at Rochester's Third Annual Drama Clinic on March 1.

fessional theatre.

The Guild is sponsored jointly by the C.Y.O. and Knights of Columbus Council 178 of Rochester. Agenda will be sent gladly to any group interested: Junior Catholic Theatre Guild, 940 Hudson Ave., Rochester 21, N. Y.

WORKSHOPS — CLIN

Rocky Mountain Region

Dr. Earl C. Bach launched the Seventh Annual Denver Drama Festival at Loretto Heights College on March 1. Sister Mary James Elmer, B.V.M., is chairman. Productions included: "Afraid of the Dark," "The Florist Shop," "Rope," "The Importance of Being Earnest," "A Victim of the Seal," "Anastasia," "Gray Bread." Critic judge was the Rev. Charles Herbst, C.M.

Detroit Unit

Technical Workshop for high school students was sponsored by the Detroit Unit of N.C.T.C. at Rosary High School on Feb. 22 with over 250 directors and students in attendance. Four colleges of the area presented demonstrations, lectures and panel discussions. Mr. Richard Burgwin, University of Detroit, spoke and demonstrated Voice and Diction. Victor Dial, Mercy College, chairmaned the section entitled Stage Movement. Students of Marygrove College gave a makeup demonstration and players from Marymanse College, Toledo, presented Line Interpretation through a rehearsal technique, giving scenes from their latest production, "Goodby, My Fancy." Panel discussion for directors on Play Selection was held by Sister Mary Avila, I.H.M., Marygrove College, and Mr. Burgwin. Students of Marygrove and Mercy College, Detroit, conducted a student discussion on the Formation of a Drama Club. Sister Rose Terrence, O.P., was chairman.

La Crosse Unit

If Sister Mary Theodata, FSPA, Wisconsin Unit Chairman, and Sister Janet, OSB, Chairman of the La Crosse Unit, have any doubts about the success of the first Theatre Workshop in the newly formed unit, the Directors and Students from the fifteen Wisconsin and Minnesota schools in attendance are all ready to allay those doubts. No better way to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Wisconsin festival could ever have been imagined.

Getting the cold, cold Eau Claire winter day off to a glowing start was the gracious welcome of Regis Principal, Rev. John D. Rossiter. NCTC's beloved prexy, Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, keyed the Workshop with his usual earnest and stirring challenge to Catholic theatre. The high school group was deeply impressed by the interest of NCTC "Brass" in teen theatre in the Midwest area and developed on the spot a new kind of respect for their potential in good theatre. As one youngster put it: "Gee, we're almost king pins in this outfit, aren't we?"

The program was so varied, so challenging, so helpful to



La Crosse Unit chairman, Sister M. Janet, O.S.B., and Father John D. Rossiter, principal of Regis High School, Eau Claire, greet N.C.T.C. president Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S.

directors, and so new to a large percentage of the student audience that it merits listing here.

Makeup Demonstration and Lecture, Mr. W. E. Murphrey, Northwestern Costume House, Inc., Minneapolis, Minn.; Reader's Theatre, "The Pied Piper," "O'Hallaron's Luck," Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa; Arena Theatre, "The Importance of Being Earnest," Aquinas Players, La Crosse; History of Costume, Mr. Murphrey; Drama Chorus, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn.; Applied Dance Technique, Miss Joan Renecke, College of St. Teresa, Winona, Minn.

S.M.H.

Nebraska Unit

Third Annual One-Act Play Festival was held at Duquesne College, Omaha on Feb. 8. Mother McShane, president, gave the welcome address. Productions included "Sky Fodder," "Sunday Costs Five Pesos," "Taming of the Shrew," "Riders to the Sea," "Suppressed Desires," Presentation of Awards was made by Rev. Robert P. Neenan, S.J., and critic judge was Dr. Dallas Williams, Dept. of Speech and Drama, University of Nebraska.

Illinois Unit

Fourth Annual High School Play Festival was held at the College of St. Francis, Joliet, Ill., on Feb. 1. Welcome was given by Sister M. Elvira, O.S.F., president. Productions were "The Bishop's Candlesticks," "Shubert Alley," "The Princess Marries the Page," "Faith and Love," "Early Frost." Rev.

INICS — FESTIVALS

Mathias Kucera, O.S.B., critic judge; V. Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Wagner, announcement of winners; Rt. Rev. Msgr. R. Blanchette, presentation of awards.

Cincinnati Unit

Fifth Annual High School Speech Festival, sponsored by Edgecliff Players was held on March 1 at Our Lady of Cincinnati College. Opening announcements, Dr. D. J. Steible, chairman; welcome, Elizabeth Gleason, hostess; address, Rev. Alfred G. Stritch. Events included Dramatic and Humorous Declamations, Original Oratory, Extemporaneous Speaking; one act plays, "Romance of the Willow Pattern" and "White Iris."

Houston Unit

Dominican Drama Workshop was held on Dec. 6, 7 at St. Pius X High School, Houston, Texas. Play selections by

Miss Lela Blount included: "Glass Menagerie," "The Remarkable Mr. Pennypacker," "This Property Is Condemned," "Carousel," "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay," "Medea," "Romeo and Juliet." Scenes were also given from "Relatives by Affection," and "Song at the Scaffold." Lecturers included Rev. Hugh J. Haffey, C.S.B., University of St. Thomas; Mr. Ralph Mead, KPRC-TV producer; Mrs. Nina Vance and John Wylie, The Alley Theatre, Houston.

Modern Poetry Symposium

Catholic Renascence Society gave a Symposium on the works of T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas, W. H. Auden and William Carlos Williams on April 7, 8 at the Sheraton-Ten Eyck Hotel, Albany, N. Y. Speakers included Hugh Kenner, Sr. M. Cleophas, R.S.M., John Logan, Sr. Bernetta Quinn, O.S.F., Louis L. Martz, Rev. William J. J. Rooney, Brother Fidelian Burke, F.S.C., Paul Carroll, Laurence Michel, David A. Kelly, Richard Sylvester, Barry Ulanov.



Greater New York Unit

Chairmen and guests of the Greater New York Catholic Theatre Workshop at Marymount College, Tarrytown, N. Y., Feb. 14, 15, 16, are shown above. From left: Mother M. Peter, R.S.H.M., hostess; Robert Smett, vice president of N.C.T.C.; Mrs. Christopher Wyatt, Catholic World drama critic; Eddie Dowling, keynote lecturer; Rev. John Leonard, S.J., Mid-Atlantic Regional Chairman; Mother M. Camillus, O.S.U., Greater New York Unit Chairman.

Theatre at Mount Aloysius

by Marie Petrone
Dept. of Speech and Drama

Mount Aloysius is tied up with a great deal of TV work right now. One day each month we take over a program called "Horizons" for WFBG-TV, Altoona. Although the program is mainly educational, the supervisors enjoy seeing shows that are entertaining as well. They feel these attract a much wider audience than the lecture or panel. They have even asked us to take over a regular period once a week; however, we are a small school and find it impossible to add such a burden to our already extra-curricular laden faculty and students. Here's what we've done recently and will do soon, though:

On Christmas Eve the academy and junior college combined efforts to present typical Christmas scenes and tableaux, along with Christmas carols. On January 6 the junior college presented a cutting of "The Doctor in Spite of Himself" prefaced by my short discussion of Moliere's works. On February 2 the junior college students presented scenes from several of the plays they have done previously for Mount audiences—too much to mention here. The important part of this information is that we are going to give, essentially, a rundown on our drama policy, and this will include a detailed explanation of our membership in NCTC. I don't know how much of a boost this will be to the organization—WFBG-TV reaches 28 county stations—but at least it will be our effort.

Last month we offered our TV viewers "30 Minutes with Shakespeare." This will be partly lecture and discussion on Shakespeare's times and the theatre of his day—using visual aids—and the oral interpretation of a few of the bard's sonnets and scenes from his plays, notably "Othello."

Other than the TV stints we've been keeping busy with actual stage work. First project of the school year was the junior college's One-Act Play Festival in late November. The agenda was as follows:

Moliere's "The Doctor in Spite of Himself" (a one-act cutting using narration)

The Recognition Scene from "Anastasia"

Christopher Morley's "Rehearsal"

On December 18, just before dismissing for Christmas vacation, the academy players did the one-act "Geraldine and



A moment from "One Red Rose" at Assumption High School, Louisville, Ky.

the White Robe." Incidentally, this is a fine play, but Catholic directors may hesitate over it because of the minister prominently involved. We changed this character to a social worker and found the play an easy one to put on in a short amount of time. (We had only one week to rehearse.) It's not a great play, but good for the farewell party drama sometimes needed during the holy season to supplement the many religious festivities a school traditionally has.

A Reader's Theatre version of a play by our dean emeritus, Sister Mary de Sales, R.S.M., called "The Shepherdess of Lourdes" and was given by members of the junior college Sodality on February 11 to mark the Lourdes centennial.

Major productions for both the junior college and academy were presented within one week of each other shortly after Easter. On April 12 the Mount Aloysius Academy Players gave their children's theatre production of Conrad Seiler's "The Clown Who Ran Away." On April 18 the junior college's Tower Players enacted "Blithe Spirit."

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Next Month

Music Theatre Edition

CREDO

I believe that every man deep within his heart yearns to work in the theatre, to be a part of, yes a cell within the gigantic pulsating body of the dream-weavers. I hold that it is as natural for a human to desire to take on someone else's character—either for better or worse—as it is for him to be forever restless, confined within his present surroundings. The deep satisfaction one derives from interpreting someone else's character and bringing it out tempered with his own special style is beyond description. To be an instrument in uniting the separate elements of an author's lines, the actor's interpretations and an appreciative audience gives one a lift somewhat akin to the feeling of a creator.

I am convinced that any member of the theatre family, however insignificant, is a blessing to society for he has learned the basic rules of God and Man, "Love thy neighbor as thyself" and "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," through contact with the theater. He could never have remained within the chaotic, nerve racking and close atmosphere of theater work if he did not sustain these truths foremost within his mind. I feel that there are no closer friendships nor more bitter enmities than those found within the art circles. Feelings run high; touchy temperaments flare up often; for this is constantly moving, creative work demanding creative and vivacious personalities. One is either hot or cold—there is no neutral medium. But before you condemn us for hot heads remember even Christ said He could not abide the lukewarm. So it is with the stage—the unimaginative and unfeeling will find no place among our numbers.

I am of the staunch belief that there is no better versed man in human nature than the actor or director. The actor must essentially study the character and emotions of a different type of person each time he learns a role. He must become that person. Thus he soon learns to identify the same problems in other people's actions. The director learns so very much about people by his willingness to do thankless work—and from his attitudes toward fellow workers. I believe that the culture we place before the public will be what they in general will come to accept. We will set the pace for the appreciation of fine art. I hold that we are responsible for the varied tastes that people develop in regard to a great many things. For the theatre involves everything and everybody either directly or indirectly.

These things I believe.

Patricia Vollmar
Aquinus High School
La Crosse, Wisconsin

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S. J. A. Greasepaint

And there's plenty of it these days! Comedy, mystery, intrigue have been the order of the day as our dear upper classmen, the Seniors, showed off their acting ability in their Class Festival. To us Juniors was thrown the chaos of scenery, lighting, make-up and all the drudgery, and will you pardon me if I tell you that some mighty fine effects were created, even if a few gentle proddings on the part of the Director were necessary.

The Class Festival was held to determine which play should go to the State Festival in March. The name of each play was printed on the ticket. Tickets were held until after the performance and the best play voted for. Also, on the reverse the students wrote the name of the actress they deemed the best in each play. It was a lot of vote-counting but it was fun.

Our very small and inadequate stage was turned into a room in a girls' dormitory for "A Date with the Professor." From the co-educational university we traveled to the roof of a New York tenement for "The Roof," to capture the perpetrator of a recent murder. The next stopping place was a railroad station in war-torn Europe for "The Woman in the Freight-Car." I suppose we could have assembled a greater variety of properties and scenes in three one-act plays, but I don't know where.

Anyway, everything turned out beautifully. "The Freight-car" went to Clarksburg for the festival, and was well received.

—Sharon McInerney, '59
St. Joseph Academy
Wheeling, West Virginia

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A STAR IS BORN

January 4, 1958

Dear Sandy,

I know it's been simply ages since I've written you but I've been so busy!

You'll never in a million years be able to guess what's happened to me! I've got a part in the school play! Can you believe it?

Ouch! I just pinched myself to see if it's true. It is!

Love,
Sue

January 5, 1958

Dear Sandy,

You know what? I forgot to tell you the name of the play! It's "Tune of the Trumpeters" by H. A. M. Ambersteiner, a dramatic story of the French Revolution.

In it I play this devastatingly beautiful woman who has been sentenced to the gallows because she won't reveal the whereabouts of her handsome husband, a notorious bandit, who has been looting the state's treasury and is wanted dead or alive by the king! It's a tremendously juicy part! I just can't wait to sink my teeth into it!

Yours,
Sue

P.S.—Enclosed is a ticket to the March first performance.

January 12, 1958

Dear Sandra,

Wow! Is that a coincidence! Now that you have a copy of the play you'll be able to follow any progress. My name's Lady Gwendolyn.

Susan

P.S.—We've been "in production" (doesn't that sound glamorous?) a week now and I can tell that fate has simply destined this play to be a hit!

January 17, 1958

Dearest Sandra,

Well! I'm terribly sorry you can't find it! It's right there under your nose! Look in the second column under "cast."

Susan

January 24, 1958

Sandra,

Under MOB!

S. B.

NEWS NOTES

(Continued from page 2.)

Cathedral Senior High School, Duluth, Minn.—"Anastasia," March 16, 17.

Our Lady of Mercy High School, Rochester, N. Y.—"Life with Mother," Feb. 14, 15; tour of local radio-television station WHAM, Feb. 5.

Holy Family Academy, Bayonne, N. J.—"Oklahoma," directed by Sister M. Jane Anita, S.S.J.

Ursuline Centennial, Ursuline Nuns of Louisville, Ky. and Columbia, S. C.—"Daughters of Victory," Feb. 16, Sister M. Carmel, Catholic High School, Columbia.

Rosary Academy, Watertown, Mass.—"Looks So Eloquent," "The Young and Fair," "Early Frost," "Under tow," "Anastasia," directed by Sister Rosaleen, O.P.

Academy of the Holy Angels, Minneapolis, Minn.—"The Mikado," Feb. 7, 8, 9; "The Charm Racket," student directed, readers' theatre, scenes from the classics, Feb. 16; "Seven Sisters," April 11, 12, 13.

Mother of Mercy High School, Cincinnati, O.—"The Sleeping Beauty of Loreland," Feb. 16, 17.



"Oklahoma!" at Holy Family Academy, Bayonne, N. J.

Miss Barnes:

I've never been so insulted in all my sixteen years! I never in my life said it was a big part!

Just because I use my imagination! (You probably haven't even discovered yours yet)!

All I can say is that the feelings are mutual!

Miss Susan Birld

P.S.—May I please have my ticket back?

Joanne Zarzour
Regina High School
South Euclid, Ohio

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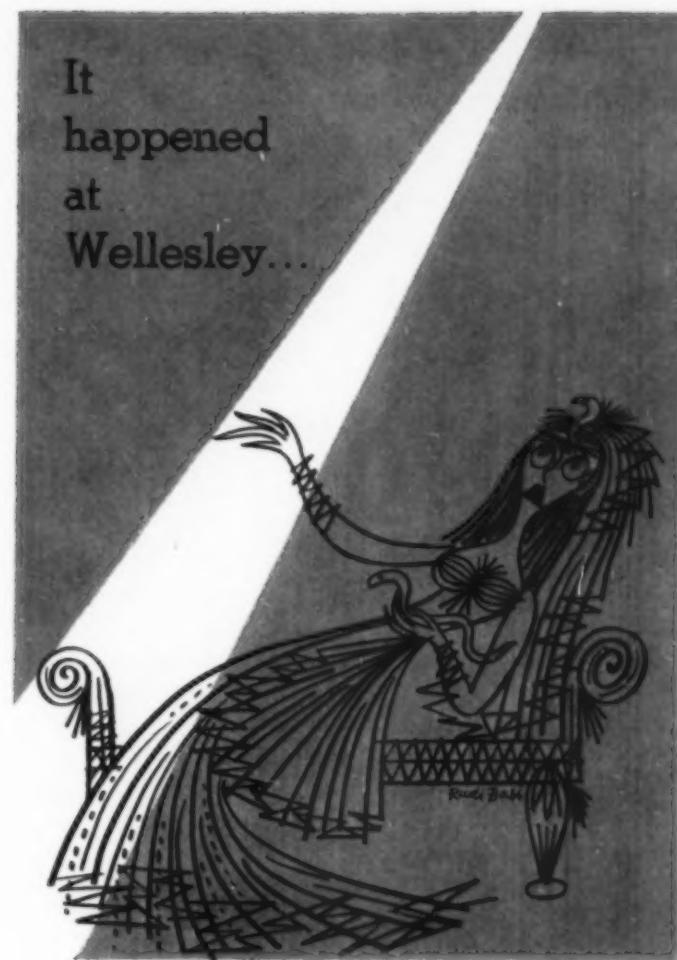
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SUICIDE ON FILM

(From St. Louis Review, St. Louis, Mo.)

Let no one tell you that, since it started its moral ratings in 1936, The National Legion of Decency has "not moved with the times." Without discarding its original, moral yardstick, the Legion has made significant advances in its processes of evaluation.

Let us look at films involving suicide. In 1942-43 Emmett Lavery's screenplay, "Behind the Rising Sun" was rated "B." The Legion objected that hara-kiri by a Japanese officer was "presented in plot solution as performed for noble purposes." Lavery, a practicing Catholic, insisted that "noble purpose" was envisaged, albeit wrongfully, by the character and should not occasion moral objection.

In Warner's currently released "Sayonara," an American GI (Red Buttons) and his Japanese bride (Miyoshi Umeki), commit double suicide. Approving this film for "adults and adolescents," the Legion simply points out that "certain moral elements (presumably including the suicide) "must be interpreted in the light of behavior patterns indigenous to a pagan culture," which seems to have been Lavery's point in 1942.

Of Rank's British film, "The Red Shoes" (1947-48), the producers argued that, in a fantasy, Moira Shearer's ballet slippers danced her under a train. The Legion insisted this was suicide and rated the film "morally objectionable in part." As recently as 1951-52 Jack Palance's disillusioned hollywood star in "The Big Knife" drew Legion objections to "suicide sympathetically treated," although there was further objection to the film's "low moral tone." Now Otto Preminger's fine screen version of Sagan's "Bonjour Tristesse" gives clear intimation of suicide although accident is not entirely ruled out. The film is approved for adults.

We see that the Legion of Decency now gives full consideration, not only to the screen treatment of suicide, but to the frame of reference within which it occurs. This seems to be a wise move forward.

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CT IN LOUISVILLE

by ROSALIE URBAITIS

Is it enough to give several recent-run plays a year to inspire, promote, and sustain interest in a Catholic Theatre Guild? The Catholic Theatre Guild of Louisville, Kentucky thinks not.

After an active summer in which were held three workshops (make-up, speech improvement, and dramatic interpretation) the Guild started its season with a "Summer Showcase." This consisted of two vignettes and the Christopher Fry "Phoenix to Frequent." Presentation was made to season ticket holders and other invited guests at General Electric's beautiful new auditorium, Monogram Hall. This "showcase" was again presented to several charitable institutions, convents and P.T.A. groups.

The first major production of the season was the Mary Chase comedy-fantasy "Mrs. McThing" played to an audience of approximately three hundred.

A "Fall Showcase" was then introduced and is currently being seen by large and small groups throughout the Falls City Area. Three monologues and a vignette comprise the program. One of the monologues "Baby Sitter's Lament" is an original by Guild member, Ellen Muldoon.

The second major production of the season, "Dial M for Murder" by Frederick Knott was given December 15th. The costumes for Cecelia Jean Mattingly (Margot) were loaned by the local 'Over Five-seven' Shop.

In addition to the major productions and the "showcases" a one-act play is, also, touring the city. This is "The Roof" and is next slated for an appearance at a Jewish recreation center.

In the latter part of January a card-party and social

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were held for the benefit of the building fund. As all major productions are now being given at the Woman's Club Auditorium and meetings are held in a room rented from the Knights of Columbus, this was a very important project for the Louisville Guild.

The third production of the season was Philip Barry's "Second Threshold" on February 16th under the direction of Miss Helen Voigt, dramatic instructor at Ursuline College.

In these ways, the Catholic Theatre Guild of Louisville is becoming an important part of Catholic life in that city and the surrounding area.

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